

### **III. POPULATION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

Population stands out as one of the most defining aspects of a community. Factors such as growth rate, distribution, and characteristics illustrate both the composition and evolution of a locality. The provision of many other public services, such as the construction of schools and development of recreational facilities, must focus on the present and future needs of an area relative to its population trends.

#### **Recent Development Activity**

During the past two decades, the greater Hamilton community has grown through development of some infill lots in the Town and primarily due to development occurring adjacent to the Town. The earlier portion of this time period saw the development of subdivisions including Hamilton Acres, Hamilton Knolls, Hamilton Terrace, Winodee, and Carriage Ridge. More recently, the subdivisions of Stone Eden and Hamilton Station Estates are in the process of developing and contribute to the growing Hamilton area population.

Loudoun County's growth summary report and building permit data show that between 1995 and 2001, approximately 180 permits were issued for residential dwellings for properties in the Hamilton zip code area. Of that, five permits were issued for residential dwelling units for properties within the corporate limits of the town and approximately sixty permits were issued for properties within the Joint Land Management Area (JLMA).

#### **Opportunities and Constraints for Population Growth**

In the last decade, the County experienced a high degree of growth. The Hamilton area experienced its share of this growth. Growth in the Town and JLMA comes from both a regional demand for new development, as well as from the attractive, "small town" character and high quality of life of the local community. To address growth pressures in the rural areas of the County and to preserve existing farms, policy direction in the County's Revised General Plan has placed an emphasis on agricultural and rural economy uses as opposed to residential development. This change in policy will ultimately affect growth in the rural areas around the Town and JLMA. The County's policy also encourages development to occur within the corporate limits of the Town prior to moving into the JLMA area to facilitate the efficient use of resources and land management.

The Hamilton JLMA has been an attractive area for residential development. Features that make the area attractive to development include relatively well-drained soils with good percolation rates for septic systems, gently rolling and scenic topography, and good road access.

The major constraint to development within the Town corporate limits as well as the JLMA is the lack of undeveloped land. The Town and much of JLMA are virtually "built out". Only about twenty acres of land within the corporate limits and 70 acres of land within the JLMA are undeveloped and potentially available for development in the near to mid-term future. Any development within the JLMA also is limited by whether it will be served by the Town with public utilities or constrained by the inherent limitations of the soils for on-site wastewater disposal systems. Another important consideration is that area development is limited by current road capacity.

## **Current Population Estimates**

The 2000 US Census provides the most accurate available estimate of current population within the Town and the JLMA. Table 1 shows the year 2000 demographic information for Hamilton and the JLMA.

The 1990 US Census indicated a population of 700 and 254 households within the Town. The 2000 census reported a population of 562 and a household count of 226. The persons per household increased from 2.75 to 3.05 for the census area including the Town, the greater Hamilton area, and the Route 7 West planning area.

There has been no identifiable event that would explain this apparent loss of population or households. Building permit records indicate growth in and around Hamilton. There has been no catastrophic natural event or major economic downturn in the local or regional economy that would explain a loss in households or population. Therefore, the only reasonable explanation for this is that there was an error in the 1990 census information. It is possible that growth actually occurred in the JLMA and was attributed to be in the corporate limits, however this is difficult to verify because the Census tract and JLMA areas do not coincide. Regardless, it is clear that the Hamilton area has been growing in terms of households and population and that growth has had, and will continue to have, an impact on the Town as well as the County.

<b>TABLE 1 POPULATION TOWN OF HAMILTON AND JLMA</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Loudoun County</b>	<b>Hamilton</b>	<b>JLMA</b>
1980	57,427	598	<sup>1</sup>
1990	86,129	700	1,101 <sup>2</sup>
2000	172,173	562	1333 <sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> JLMA did not exist

<sup>2</sup> Estimation of JLMA population

<sup>3</sup> Boundaries of the JLMA were reduced in 2000.

Source: U.S. Census information, Loudoun County Department of Planning

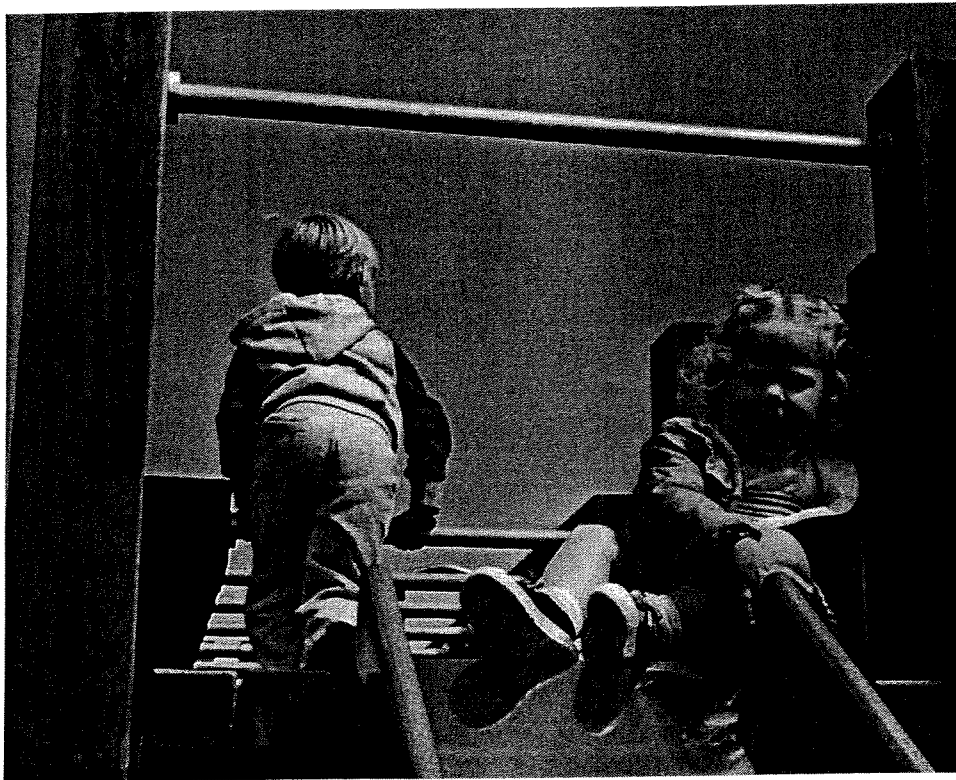
## **Population Forecasts**

Given the discrete number of undeveloped parcels in the corporate limits and the JLMA, population forecasts can be done by assessing the buildout potential. Growth within the Town and JLMA will be tied to the availability of these developable parcels. A number of assumptions have been made regarding projected population growth. There is no up-zoning anticipated within the corporate limits or within the JLMA. There is also no residential redevelopment anticipated in the short term. The buildout scenario would also be based on the Existing Zoning Map and development policies in this Plan.

Within the Town, approximately thirty-two dwelling units could be added under current zoning. This would potentially add approximately 100 people for a total estimated future population of just over 600 in the Town. The population per household is expected to remain fairly stable, balanced by a combination of younger families moving to the area and a maturing existing population. The projections are based on growth anticipated within the present municipal boundaries only. Future populations would vary if the Town were to annex developed portions of the County surrounding the Town.

Approximately 117 additional units could be built within the JLMA. This would result in a population increase of 357 persons for a future estimated population of approximately 1690 in the JLMA.

Aside from this type of buildout analysis, population forecasting is also done by modeling regional demographic information. Loudoun County periodically conducts population forecasts in cooperation with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). Forecasts produced by the County coincide with the Fiscal Impact Technical Review Committee review of projected service needs in the Planning Subareas in the County. The Town of Hamilton and the JLMA are in the County's Route 7 West planning area. Forecasts for Hamilton and the JLMA are based on the small area geography zones developed by COG and the development patterns and potential in these zones. Round 6.3 forecasts indicate that the combined corporate and JLMA populations may approach approximately 3,000 by the year 2010.



Hamilton Park

## **GOALS – POPULATION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

1. New development will be encouraged to locate in the corporate limits of Hamilton before moving into the JLMA.
2. Encourage quality in residential development and sensitivity to maintain the character of the Town.
3. Encourage the principle of stewardship in the use of the land in and around Town regarding residential development.
4. Allow for growth at a level that can be sustained by the public services and infrastructure.

## **POLICIES – POPULATION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

1. Evaluate residential development proposals with consideration for the housing goals of the Town and the finite water resources and limited on-site wastewater disposal locations for the Town.
2. Ensure that a scale and density of residential development is compatible with adjacent and surrounding land uses, supporting infrastructure, and environmental conditions to maintain the overall high quality of life in the Town and its adjacent area.
3. Ensure that residential growth does not overwhelm the elementary school and put the school enrollment over capacity.
4. Limit residential development to that which is feasible given the Town's finite groundwater resource constraints.

## **ACTION ITEMS – POPULATION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

1. Amend the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to incorporate design and development standards that promote the traditional development pattern of Hamilton.
2. Monitor the number of sewer and water taps granted for new development in the Town and surrounding area to protect the finite groundwater resources for the Town and JLMA.
3. Develop a database on the current population, available supply of housing, and current housing demand within Hamilton and the surrounding area. Work with County School Board to project school population and needs.
4. Review Town development regulations to identify possible streamlining measures to minimize the impact of Town regulations on the cost of housing.
5. Identify measures that the Town might implement to promote and ensure the maintenance of residential homes and properties, in order to protect existing property values and protect public health, safety, and welfare.